



TOM CILMI
Suffolk County Legislator
10th District

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Cilmi Files “Safer Streets” Legislation

Legislator Tom Cilmi announced he has filed legislation which he says will make Suffolk intersections safer by extending the timing of amber and red lights.

The bill, entitled “Establishing the Suffolk County Safer Streets Program” directs the County’s Department of Public Works to extend the duration of amber lights at all County-controlled intersections to the “maximum allowable duration,” and to similarly extend the timing of red lights to allow residual traffic to flow through intersections safely.

Cilmi, who has opposed the County’s red light camera program, calling it a “money-grab,” says his bill will make intersections safer without fining residents. “There are ways to make all intersections safer without playing gotcha law enforcement,” he said. “The trick is to give people more time to slow down and stop at intersections while, at the same time, engineering intersections to allow any residual traffic to flow through before traffic in the opposing direction is given a green light. That will reduce the incidents of drivers speeding through yellows and reduce the incidents of T-bone accidents as well.”

While acknowledging he is not a traffic engineer, Cilmi says this is simple common sense. He says he purposefully crafted the bill without specific light timings because “traffic engineers should have appropriate discretion.” He also pointed to the fact that guidelines are set by the Federal and State governments.

Cilmi said, “My bill gives our engineers the ability to do their jobs while using common sense techniques to make our roads safer. No one can argue with that.”

The legislation (IR-1407-2016) will be laid on the table at the Legislature’s next General Meeting on May 10 and could be voted on as early as June 1.